MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 324.

Decrease in goods earnings from Railways

*324. SHRI V. RAJESHWAR RAO:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Revised Estimates for 1993-94 for goods earnings from the Railways was lower than the Budget Estimates for the same year and the Actuals were even lower than the Revised Estimates;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for such a low level of earnings; and

(c) what is being done to improve the performance in this area?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

Statement

Decrease in Goods Earnings from Railways

(a) Yes Sir. The estimates of Goods Earnings alongwith the Actual earnings in 1993-94 are given below:

(Rs. in Cr.)

Budget Estimates	13,173
Revised Estimates	12,830
Actuals	12,557

(b) The shortfall in earnings was mainly on account of non-materialisation of projected traffic from Core Sector, *viz.* Coal, Iron Ore for export, Foodgrains, POL and also the drop in the average lead of Fertilisers, Pig Iron and Finished Steel from Steel Plants, Foodgrains and Coal.

(c) Several steps have been initiated like close coordination with the concerned Ministries, Departments and other major users, innovative marketing efforts to catch more traffic, introduction of higher capacity trains, development of nodal sheds for goods traffic, thrust in Multimodal Transport/containerisation and strengthening of the general efficiency of the system etc.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR: Sir, the reply says that the shortfall in earnings was mainly on account of non-materialisation of projected traffic from the core sector. This year's Economic Servey has clearly reported that in the core sector, there was an excellent growth of eight per cent compared to last year's four per cent. When there was an excellent growth in the core sector in coal, steel cement and petroleum products, where has all this traffic gone? Steel production, in the year referred to in the reply, was 0.37 million tonnes; in the year 1993-94, it rose to two million tonnes. Where has the projected traffic gone? In the reply itself, the Minister has said that several steps have been initiated for close co-ordination. "Initiated" means there was no co-ordination earlier. Now they have initiated co-ordination. Will the hon. Minister kindly elaborate on where all this traffic has gone?

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: The hon. Mmber has spoken about the economic growth pertaining to various sectors this year. But the questions relates to 1993-94. The problem was, after the unfortunate incident of Ayodhya, the disturbances in the country did not help the atmosphere to build up the level of traffic which the Planning Commission had projected and the Railways also had their own projections. We thought that in that year we might have lost, but in the next year we would get the traffic. Unfortunately, in the second year also, it did not happen. That is why in 1993-94, the traffic was not only less than the Budget Estimates but also less than the Revised Estimates.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAKR: Sir, I gave the figures for the relevant year, 1993-94. It is a fact that the exports of steel and all other commodities increased. Anyway, my second supplementary is, would the hon. Minister kindly elaborate on the innovative marketing efforts to catch more traffic which the Railways have started?

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, so far as the core sector is concerned, no such marketing effort is required because core sector is a committed sector where the Railways has its priority, and it is in the national interest and in the interest of the economy that the Railways takes the full responsibility for the Budget.

So far as the other traffic is concerned, yes, Sir, I must say that the effort for marketing is needed. Now, the Container Corporation has been in the field and in the last two or three years there has been a phenomenal growth in the Container Corporation's traffic. Sir, I take it as a temporary phenomenon. It is not that this is a pattern which is likely to continue, but nevertheless, I must say, Sir, that in addition to the traffic which the Railways could carry, there are offers even from the private sector to carry the traffic like the trucks' traffic being taken by the trains, instead of putting the burden on the road traffic which helps even the fuel economy. Sir, I do agree with the hon. Member that we are stepping up our efforts to have a systematic marketing, to bring the road traffic parallel to the rail traffic. We are working on that and I am sure that we will be able to have the desired results in the near future.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the revenue from goods traffic has gone down by Rs. 600 crores. It is a colossal amount. I would like to know why it has happened and whether the Railway Ministry will look into it. I think, the wagons are not available. Even if one wagon is required, they should supply it. When the foodgrain production is so high and the procurement is so high, where has this traffic gone? Will the Government look into it? Sir, because the wagons are not availbale, private and other agencies are sending goods by road transport; that is why this has happened. I would like to know whether the Government will see that more wagons are made available. Unfortunately when the public sector is building wagons, the orders have been reduced by the Railway Ministry and as such, the wagons are not available. The fertiliser producers wanted to take, but they were not given wagons; that is why this has happened. I would like to know whether the Government will look into it, why the road transport is getting more freight revenue than the Railways, and whether any corrective action will be taken to have more wagons. Everyone who wants to have even one wagon, should be provided. If that is done, the Railway Ministry will definitely earn more revenue. Sir, even the Revised Estimates have gone wrong. The Actuals also have gone down and they have gone down by Rs. 300 crores even from the Revised Estimates. Will the Government look into it and find out the real reason? Don't say, "because of the infrastructure." If the Railway Ministry is going to have that view, then it will not improve. I would like to know whether the Railway Ministry will take action to see that this thing does not hapeen.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, there is a misconceived notion that if there is less traffic or less earning from the Railways, immediately the conclusion that it is because of the lack of wagons. Sir, to my mind, it is not proper and I do not think that we have refused any industry because we do not have the wagons. Sir, I can tell you one thing. The need has also changed. Earlier, we used to carry the foodgrains from North to the South. Today, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, all these States also produce foodgrains. So, generally the foodgrains were supposed to go from North to the South. It is not the samething today. Similarly cement was used to go from south to the North. Today a lot of cement is produced in the North also. Like that, it is a well.....

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Wagons are not available for coal.

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: And several times even the wagons are not made available.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Let me answer. Sir, they must allow me to answer.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Even for the thermal power project coal is not available wagons are not available.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Please allow me to answer.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: But don't justify that point.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, ours is a need-based budget. I can say it with a little more knowledge. I don't claim that I have better knowledge than the hon. Members. They might be having much more knowledge than me. But with the limited knowledge that I have I have been able to... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JAGESH DESAI: Sir, he cannot escape by saying so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister is answering. (*Interruptions*). Please listen to the Minister.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Sir,...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please don't interrupt the Minister. Let him finish.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: The Minister cannot make such remarks. He should say that he has all the information.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Kindly give me an opportunity to reply. After that you can come out with a number of supplementaries which you want.

Sir, I have the opportunity to serve both in the Coal Ministry and the Railways Ministry. I know both the sides. Very recently a coordination meeting was held among three Ministries, i.e. the Power Ministry, the Coal Ministry and the Railways Ministry. It has been some sort of a design that the Railways Ministry was blaming the Coal Ministry and the Coal Ministry was blaming the Railway Ministry. I can assure the House that we will never permit this kind of a situation because I know both the sides. After all, it is one Government under one leader.

SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA: Sir, the Minister...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please don't interrupt.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: It may be the Coal Ministry or it may be the Railway Ministry. We don't blame each other. It is our total responsibility to see that we carry coal and we carry any traffic that is available for the economic growth of the country.

Sir, they were talking about coal. Generally, coal is produced during winter. Coal is not produce during monsoon. In summer coal is not produced and it is not kept in stock due fear of fire accidents. Coal is generally proudced during winter. Unfortunately, this year, during the early part of winter coal was not produced. They had their own problems, managerial problems. Therefore, there was some delay. Now, our concentration is totally on coal. We have been able to build up sufficient stocks in power houses. There is no complaint from anybody.

SHRI JIBON ROY: Mr. Chairman, Sir, it is surprising that the Minister has stated in part (b) of the reply that because of the non-materalisation of projected traffic from the core sector the earning has gone down.

As far as I know, the coal industry and the steel industry are complaining that the Ministry is not supplying the order. In reply to Unstarred Question No. 823 of Shri Dipankar Mukherjee, the Coal Ministry said that in November, 1994, out of the total demand only 81 per cent had been fulfilled by the Railway Ministry. In February, 1995 they fulfilled only 75 per cent of the demand. The 37th Report of the Committee on Public Sector Undertakings on the Bokaro Steel Plant says that one of its plant could not run because of short supply of wagons. Let the Railway Minister assure us that he would call a meet the concerned Minister and discuss the matter and place the report before the House.

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: Sir, I am sorry I could not follow the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Jibon Roy, can you repeat the main point of your question?

SHRI JIBON ROY: Sir, the Coal Ministry says that in November, 1994 the Railway Ministry had fullfiled only 81 per cent of the requirement and in February, 1995 they could fulfil only 75 per cent of the requirement. The 37th Report of the Committee on Public Sector Undertakings says that one plant of Bokaro Steel Plant had to suffer because of short supply of wagons. Will the Hon'ble Minister call a meeting of the Administrative Ministries and discuss this matter and submit the report to us?

SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF: So far as the core sector is concerned, the coordination is always done at the level of the Cabinet Secretary. There is the Secretary (Coordination) who conducts periodic meetings between various sectors. This Government is always working with that understanding. There is no question of neglecting any area.

SHRI JIBON ROY: When they want ... supply wagons and when they want they do not supply wagons.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

New Act to replace TADA

*321. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI SUNIL KUMAR:
SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to replace TADA with a new law to curb and control anti-national elements;

(b) if so, the main features of the new contemplated law; and

(c) by when the new law is likely to be brought before Parliament?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI S. B. CHAVAN): (a) to (c) All aspects of the matter, including the issues arising out of the Supreme Court judgement on TADA, are under examination of the Government.

Southern Gas grid project

*323. SHRI V. GOPALSAMY: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the cost of the Southern Gas Grid Project at the present market price;

(b) when will the laying of the pipeline begin and what will be the length of pipeline;

(c) what is the route of the pipeline;

(d) by when the project will become operational; and